

**2023 -- H 5384 SUBSTITUTE A**

LC000825/SUB A

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**

**IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2023**

**A N A C T**

**RELATING TO ELECTIONS -- REGISTRATION OF VOTERS**

Introduced By: Representatives Baginski, Shanley, Potter, and Fenton-Fung

Date Introduced: February 03, 2023

Referred To: House State Government & Elections

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 17-9.1-3 of the General Laws in Chapter 17-9.1 entitled "Registration  
2 of Voters" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **17-9.1-3. Periods when boards receive registrations.**

4 (a) The local boards shall open their respective offices for the purposes of receiving  
5 registration of voters throughout the year during the regular business hours. Registration for any  
6 election shall close on the thirtieth (30th) day preceding an election; provided, that local boards  
7 shall not receive the registration on Sundays or legal holidays, and may receive the registrations  
8 during additional hours each day from the fortieth (40th) to the thirtieth (30th) day before any  
9 election. Nothing contained in this section shall be construed as restricting the right of statewide or  
10 local registration agents or members of the general assembly to accept registrations of voters on  
11 any day. The acceptance of registrations at any other time shall not affect the validity of any  
12 election.

13 (b) Notwithstanding any other sections of the general laws to the contrary, all local boards  
14 of canvassers shall remain open from eight-thirty (8:30) a.m. until four o'clock (4:00) p.m. on the  
15 last day prescribed by law for the taking of voter registrations to permit participation of the voters  
16 in the next succeeding election. In the event that the last day prescribed by law for the taking of  
17 voter registrations is a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday, then the local board may;

18 (1) Designate one publicly accessible location in the city or town at which voter  
19 registrations will be taken; and

1 (2) Designate the hours during which voter registration will be taken at that location, which  
2 hours shall include the hours from one o'clock (1:00) p.m. until four o'clock (4:00) p.m.

3 (c) If a local board does designate a location other than its regular place of business or does  
4 designate hours other than eight-thirty o'clock (8:30) a.m. until four o'clock (4:00) p.m., it shall:

5 (1) Publicly announce those designation(s) at least ten (10) days prior to the last day  
6 provided by law for the taking of voter registrations; and

7 (2) Advertise those designation(s) in a newspaper of general circulation in the city or town  
8 at least twice prior to the last day prescribed by law for the taking of voter registrations. The local  
9 board may substitute advertising in a newspaper by posting a conspicuous and prominent notice of  
10 those designation(s) on the municipality's website for at least ten (10) consecutive days leading up  
11 to the last day prescribed by law for the taking of voter registrations.

12 SECTION 2. Chapter 17-8 of the General Laws entitled "Local Canvassing Authorities" is  
13 hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

14 **17-8-11. Publication of early voting dates, hours, and location.**

15 (a) The local board shall advertise the dates, hours, and location of early voting in a  
16 newspaper of general circulation in the city or town at least twice prior to the commencement of  
17 any in-person early voting period to be conducted by the local board.

18 (b) The local board shall publish a conspicuous and prominent notice on the municipality's  
19 website of the dates, hours, and location of early voting, and said notice shall remain published  
20 throughout the duration of any in-person early voting period conducted by the local board.

21 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
A N A C T  
RELATING TO ELECTIONS -- REGISTRATION OF VOTERS

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1           This act would permit the substitution of advertising the voter registration deadline in a  
2 newspaper by posting notice of designation(s) on the municipality's website, continuously, for at  
3 least ten (10) consecutive days leading up to the last day prescribed by law for the taking of voter  
4 registrations and would require the local board to publish early voting dates, hours, and location at  
5 least twice in a newspaper of general circulation within the city or town, and to publish the same  
6 on the municipality's website for the duration of the in-person early voting period.

7           This act would take effect upon passage.

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